

# THE 12<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT REPORT



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PROUDLY REPRESENTING SAN FRANCISCO AND SAN MATEO COUNTIES

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## YEE URGES MEN TO JOIN WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

*STATEWIDE EFFORT URGES MEN TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*



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**CLICK HERE TO SIGN THE PLEDGE AND HELP PUT AN END TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

The White Ribbon Campaign (WRC) is an ongoing effort urging men to show their support for ending violence against women by wearing white ribbons and signing commitment cards. The Campaign's goals are to raise awareness of this problem in the community; conduct educational work in schools, workplaces, and communities; and support organizations that deal with the consequences of violence against women.

If you have any questions about the WRC or would like to distribute ribbons and commitment cards, please call Assemblymember Yee's office at 415-557-2312 or 916-319-2012.

**CLICK TO HEAR LELAND YEE ON THE WRC**

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## NEW LAWS TAKE EFFECT JANUARY 1

*YEE BILLS FOCUS ON PROTECTING CHILDREN, IMPROVING FOSTER CARE, PROMOTING LANGUAGE ACCESS*

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Several bills authored by Speaker pro Tem Yee became law on January 1. These new laws range from improving the foster care system to promoting language access to returning millions of local sales tax dollars. Due to a recent preliminary injunction granted by a federal judge, a law authored by Yee to protect children from violent video games, however will not go into effect until it first wins a legal test in US Federal Court set to begin in January.

"As a result of the multi-billion dollar video game industry's federal lawsuit, California parents will not immediately have this tool to help raise healthy kids," said Yee, who is also a child psychologist. "The medical data clearly indicates that these ultra-violent video games have harmful effects on kids, and thus I fully expect us to prevail in this case."

"Although the delayed implementation of the video game law is disappointing, there are a number of new laws going into effect, making January 1 a good day for California's children, parents, and consumers," said Speaker pro Tem Yee.

To ensure better quality healthcare, hospitals and clinics will be required to include a patient's principal spoken language on the patient's medical records starting the first of year as a result of AB 800.

"As we move towards greater responsiveness to the diversity of the state's population, it is important to have a record showing the principle language spoken by those served by our healthcare system," said Yee. "It is imperative that all our residents receive the best quality healthcare. Without good communication between patient and doctor, it is very difficult to have successful medical diagnosis and treatment."

AB 1114 and AB 1117 is set to strengthen the profession of acupuncture by increasing the required number of continuing education hours for license renewal as well as changing California code terminology from the offensive term "oriental" to the more accurate word "Asian."

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## YEE CONTINUES TO EARN TOP MARKS ON LEGISLATIVE SCORECARDS

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### EQUALITY CALIFORNIA

In the year the California Legislature made history by becoming the first legislature in the U.S. to pass a marriage equality bill, Speaker pro Tem Yee earned the top score (100%) on Equality California's (EQCA) Legislative Scorecard. EQCA scored legislators on 15 bills supported by the organization, including Yee's AB 866 to prohibit gay-bashing in political campaigns.

"It is wrong to defile the honor of the democratic process with vicious name-calling and whisper campaigns that have nothing to do with debate, values, or issues," said Yee. "I can not, and will not, stand idle while my friends in the gay community continue to receive inferior treatment and unequal rights. I look forward to reintroducing this bill in 2006."

"We thank Assembly Speaker pro Tem Yee for promoting an equal playing field and helping to end the misinformation and anti-gay bigotry that taints our elections cycle and divides voters," said EQCA Executive Director Geoffrey Kors. "We respect his position and leadership, and we hope this bill strikes a cord in the minds of candidates to be thoughtful and culturally sensitive to the constituencies they hope to represent."

### CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Speaker pro Tem Yee earned the top score on the Children's Legislative Report Card produced by the Children's Advocacy Institute. The report card encompassed bills on poverty, school nutrition, public health, childcare, and child protection.

"My top priority has always been and will always be to help protect our children and provide them better educational opportunities," said Yee, who is also a child psychologist.

In 2005, Yee successfully passed four bills specifically addressing children's health and safety, most notably AB 1179, which prohibits the sale of ultra-violent video games to children. AB 1116 allows foster parents to administer insulin for their diabetic foster children. And AB 443 and AB 444 address the growing concern of nutrition in schools.

### LAMBDA LETTERS PROJECT

Speaker pro Tem Yee earned the top score on the California Legislative Score Card released by the Lambda Letters Project, a leading civil rights organization. The scorecard measured legislators' votes in the areas of HIV/AIDS, Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/intersex (LGBTI), People of color, and Women. Although the average score in the Assembly was 67% and 68% in the Senate, Assemblyman Yee earned 100% in all four issue areas.

"We are happy to report that Assemblymember Yee received an overall rating of 100% from the Lambda Letters Project in every year that he has served in the State Legislature," said Boyce Hinman, chief advocate for Lambda Letters Project. "The breadth of his commitment to social, civil, and economic justice is impressive."

The scorecard included Yee's AB 866 as well as AB 775, legislation that would prohibit the use of children under the age of 15 as interpreters in hospitals, clinics, and doctors' offices. Numerous studies point to misdiagnosis, incorrect medication and drug-use, and possible life-threatening situations due to using children as interpreters.

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## NEW CHANGES TO MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT *MAJOR CHANGES DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND, ESPECIALLY FOR NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS*

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Speaker pro Tem Yee recently joined the Senior Action Network and On Lok Senior Health Services to warn Medi-Cal/Medicare beneficiaries about major changes to their prescription drug insurance. The first of the year marks the beginning of the new federal prescription drug program, known as Medicare Part D. Individuals who are eligible for Medicare or dual enrollment in Medi-Cal/Medicare will be eligible for the new Medicare Part D, a complex prescription drug program that offers the consumer many choices that are often difficult to differentiate.

"In San Francisco alone, there are over 120,000 seniors and persons with disabilities that will be covered by the new program," said Yee. "It is critical for the public to understand that not all plans provide the same coverage. Beneficiaries should carefully review their selected plan and make sure that their local pharmacy accepts the plan and that all their medications are covered under their particular plan."

Dually enrolled Medi-Cal/Medicare beneficiaries have already been assigned to a prescription drug benefit plan and should have received a yellow letter in October indicating which plan has been selected for them. Beneficiaries can change their plan as often as they want, but only within a set of ten approved plans. If a plan is selected that is not part of the approved list, additional payment may be required. Individuals only covered by Medicare are not automatically enrolled in a plan and have until May 15, 2006 to select one of the forty-seven plans available that best suits their needs.

"Although people have several months to select a plan, this is a complex process, especially for non-native English speakers," said Yee. "I urge Medi-Cal and Medicare recipients to seek the local assistance available."

A couple of local programs actively working on this issue are the Senior Action Network and On Lok Senior Health Services, both of which provided detailed information and expert analysis of the changes to be expected.

If people do not know what plan they are assigned to, they should call 1-800-Medicare and ask for help. After public concern that multi-lingual services were not being adequately offered, the government began to contract new resources for non-native English speakers. National hotlines have been established to assist non-native English speakers. Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese are just some of the languages which are being offered.

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**YEE NAMED "PERSON OF THE YEAR"  
BY LEADING VIDEO GAME NEWS SITE  
GAMEPOLITICS.COM SITES ACCOMPLISHMENT WITH VIDEO  
GAME BILL, INTERACTION WITH GAMERS**

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Speaker pro Tem Yee has been named the 2005 "Person of the Year" by GamePolitics.com, a leading news website on video games and the video game business.

In awarding Yee with the first-ever GamePolitics "Person of the Year," the website's creator and longtime Philadelphia Inquirer columnist Dennis McCauley, cited many of Yee's recent accomplishments including passing Assembly Bill (AB) 1179, California's law to prohibit the sale of ultra-violent video games to children; convincing Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (R-Los Angeles) to sign the bill despite his ties to the video game industry; causing a national outcry over the controversial hidden sex scenes known as "hot coffee" in the ever-popular game Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas; and his respectful interaction with video gamers and the video game industry.

"In retrospect, there was a David and Goliath flavor to Yee's accomplishment that can't be ignored," said McCauley. "After all, this is California, the heart of the video game industry, a battleground state in which the ESA (Entertainment Software Association) and industry players like Microsoft spent tens of thousands of dollars on lobbying efforts aimed at defeating Yee's bill."

"Whether California's game statute ultimately survives or not, Leland Yee was clearly the dominant political figure on the video game scene in 2005," said McCauley. "But our selection of Leland Yee as 2005 Person of the Year is about more than just political clout. Unlike many politicians and activists, Yee is very much at ease interacting with the gaming community. And although he is not a gamer himself, Yee invariably speaks to gamers - and about gamers - with respect."

Regarding the "hot coffee" controversy, in which Yee was the first political figure to speak out on the issue, GamePolitics states, "The domino effect he touched off in Sacramento continued all the way to Washington, D.C. where no less a political star than Hillary Clinton added her voice."

AB 1179 was scheduled to become law on January 1, but due to a lawsuit by the multi-billion dollar video game industry, the law cannot go into effect until the legal proceedings conclude.

"When all is said and done in the courts, I fully expect California parents to have this law as a tool in helping raise healthy kids," said Yee. "I am honored by the recognition from GamePolitics, a leading source for video game news and a valuable forum for video gamers." ❖

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"As more and more people learn about the positive health impacts of acupuncture, the practice is becoming part of American mainstream culture," said Yee. "For the health and safety of our community, it is important that the profession be well defined and that the public have a clear understanding of who acupuncture practitioners are and what role they can play in the health and welfare of healthcare consumers."

For thousands of foster parents AB 1116 will allow them properly care for their foster children who may need insulin for diabetic or other reasons. The new law will permit properly trained foster parents and group home staff to administer injectable maintenance medications such as insulin.

"It is just commonsense to allow trained foster parents to give necessary, life-saving injections to their foster children," said Yee. "Many foster children need these insulin shots to survive and good foster parents should not have to bring their child to a hospital or risk losing their child each and every time insulin injections are needed."

Also becoming law, but not taking effect until 2008, is AB 451 which will return millions of dollars in jet fuel sales tax revenue to airport host communities across the state. Specifically, the law closes a loophole in current law that has been exploited by United Airlines and the city of Oakland, siphoning millions of dollars in revenue from airport communities including San Francisco and San Mateo County (SFO), Ontario and San Bernardino County (ONT), Los Angeles (LAX), Sacramento (SMF), San Diego (SAN), and San Jose (SJC), all into Oakland.

"This has not been an easy fight, taking on the billion dollar interests of the airline industry and powerful political influence of Oakland," said Yee. "Fortunately, this year the Governor saw the importance of returning this revenue to our communities and now San Mateo County, San Francisco, and others will finally receive their fair share of the jet fuel sales tax dollars."

Additionally, three other Yee-authored bills will become law on January 1 including: adjusting the way sexually violent predators can file complaint charges against mental health staff; resolving a conflict between two standards of care for medical treatment of Lyme disease by formally recognizing the benefits of long-term care; and clarifying joint powers authority statute to ensure community involvement, oversight, and continued competition in the market place.

Assemblyman Yee also successfully passed three legislative resolutions in 2005, declaring Mental Health Occupations Week (ACR 54) and Microenterprise Development Month (ACR 76), as well as declaring California's official commitment to protecting the environment and opposing any federal efforts to weaken the long-standing offshore oil drilling moratorium (AJR 14). ❖

**Earthquake... Fire... Flood... What's Next?  
ARE YOU READY?**

Assemblyman Leland Yee invites you to attend:

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FAIR**

Saturday, January 21, 2006, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Visitacion Valley Middle School, 450 Raymond Ave, San Francisco, CA

*Enter parking lot from Visitacion Ave along McLaren Park*





December 3, 2005

## SAN MATEO DAILY NEWS

Saturday

SAN MATEO COUNTY'S 7-DAY-A-WEEK NEWSPAPER

# Anti-violence effort under way

## White ribbon campaign targeting men and boys

BY LIZ HARRELSON, *Daily News Staff Writer*

Using white ribbons as its symbol, a statewide campaign aims to fight domestic violence by educating boys and men.

Carrying a torch first lit in San Mateo County, state Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Leland Yee, a San Francisco Democrat, yesterday announced his plans to take a white ribbon campaign that promotes men speaking out against domestic violence statewide.



YEE



LUKIN

"There's something really significant about men setting the example," said Melissa Lukin, executive director of the non-profit organization Community

Overcoming Relationship Abuse, which hosted the kickoff.

While both men and women are victims of domestic violence, statistics show 85 percent of reported victims are women, said Lukin.

In part, domestic violence is perpetuated because one in three children is exposed to it, and often by fathers who tell children that such violence is OK, said Yee.

"The other half of that equation...the men part of that equation need to stand up and say, 'This is not appropriate,'" said Yee, who said he plans to introduce a resolution to the State Assembly in January and ask legislators to adopt comparable resolutions in their jurisdictions.

Support for the campaign, at least locally, seems to be strong.

"It takes a real man to tell another man that violence against women is unacceptable," said Russ

Cohen, a newly elected Burlingame City Council member.

"It's about men speaking out against domestic violence," said Rose Jacobs Gibson, a San Mateo County supervisors who spearheaded the county's adoption in October 2002 – then the largest participation of men in the white ribbon campaign worldwide, said [then] Gibson's [and now Yee's] spokesman Adam Keigwin in a prepared statement at that time.

In 1991, a group of Canadian men decided to urge men to speak against violence toward women by wearing a white ribbon for about a week, beginning on Nov. 25, according to the Web site [www.whiteribbon.ca](http://www.whiteribbon.ca). In Canada, the white ribbon is worn until Dec. 6, the anniversary of the 1989 Montreal massacre where an enraged gunman took to the school corridors of the city's Ecole Polytechnique and killed 14 women.





December 23, 2005

## San Mateo County Times

Monday

# Assembly bill would shield battered victims

## Proposal comes after San Mateo Woman refuses to testify against attacker

BY MALAIKA FRALEY, Staff Writer

REDWOOD CITY — Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Leland Yee will introduce a bill in January that bans judges from threatening jail time to domestic-violence victims who refuse to testify.

The bill comes after a San Mateo woman was almost incarcerated for refusing to testify at her attacker's trial.

"The recent case in San Mateo County demonstrates that we need to make a change in existing law to protect victims of domestic violence, as we currently do for sexual-assault victims," Yee, D-San Francisco, said last Friday. "Without this new legislation, future victims of domestic violence are less likely to come forward if they know they will be forced to testify or else face imprisonment."

San Mateo County Judge Robert Foiles found Katina Britt, 32, in contempt of court Dec. 7 after she said she wouldn't testify at ex-boyfriend David Gilford's trial because of fears for her safety.

A U.S. Court of Appeal granted an emergency stay Monday, the day she was scheduled to surrender to the jail that would have held her until the trial was finished or she agreed to testify.

A jury convicted Gilford, 28, last week of felony assault and burglary for beating Britt into unconsciousness in 2003. Without Britt's testimony that the

two once lived together, prosecutors were forced to drop a domestic-violence charge that would have Gilford facing 11 years in prison instead of seven.

Prosecutors said they weren't trying to punish Britt but to coerce her into testifying so Gilford would get the maximum punishment. Because of a U.S. Supreme Court decision, victims' statements to police are no longer allowed as evidence, which makes a victim's testimony more vital to prosecutors at domestic-violence trials.

It is extremely rare that a judge threatens a domestic-violence victim with jail, as most victims who are reluctant to begin with typically concede after domestic-violence counseling, Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said.

Prosecutors worry that without the threat of jail, it will be easier for attackers to intimidate victims into not testifying and escape prosecution, allowing for the abuse to continue and putting the victim's life at risk.

Britt's court-appointed attorney in the Gilford case, Paul DeMeester, is helping draft Yee's bill. DeMeester said the goal is to replicate the law for sexual-abuse victims who aren't required to testify at their abusers' trials.

"Sexual assault and domestic violence are really two aspects on the continuum; they are both just different manifestations of violence against women," DeMeester said. "We offer a certain protection to the sex-abuse victim, but not the domestic-violence victim when it should really be the same."

Domestic-violence-prevention advocates at CORA, Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse, which serves domestic-violence victims in San Mateo County, said they support the proposed legislation.

"The criminal-justice system needs to find ways to find the batterer accountable without relying on the victim. They can't be the only leverage that prosecutors use to hold a batterer accountable," said Lisa de Geneste, CORA's director of programs.

"They are essentially holding the victim responsible for the outcome of a case, and that's a huge burden for victims of domestic violence," de Geneste said.

"(Jailing victims) really sends a message to other victims of domestic violence. It's saying if you come forward, report your battering, and change your mind about testifying that you are going to be punished. This could deter a woman from coming forward to begin with." ❖